IN THE CLAIMS:

Please substitute the following claims for the same-numbered claims in the application:

1-42. (Canceled).

43. (Currently Amended) A method for targeting shoppers participating in online shopping with at least one merchant, said method comprising ~~the steps of~~:

collecting data regarding choices of individual shoppers when shopping individually;

collecting data regarding the choices of individual shoppers when participating in group shopping, said group shopping comprising multiple individuals making at least one group purchase;

determining a shopper-group interaction measure from individual shopper data and group shopper data, said group shopper data comprising a record of previous interactions between individuals within a shopping group of individuals performing said group shopping,

wherein said previous interactions comprise any of:

a shopper making a proposal to the shopping group;

a shopper voting on a proposal;

a shopper paying for the shopper's individual share of the shopping group's purchase; and

a shopper paying for the shopping group's purchase;

determining targeted information on a basis of said shopper-group interaction measure; and

sending said targeted information to one or more targeted shoppers.

44. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 43, wherein said shopper-group interaction measure is determined based on any of:

a shopper affinity index,

a leadership index,

a conformity index, and

an assertiveness index.

45. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 44, wherein said shopper affinity index is determined from a number of times a shopper has voted with other members of a group of shoppers.

46. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 44, wherein said shopper affinity index is determined from a number of times a shopper's proposal has been voted for by other members of a group of shoppers.

47. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 44, wherein said shopper affinity index is determined from a number of times a shopper has been invited by, or issued an invitation to other members of a group of shoppers.

48. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 44, wherein said shopper affinity index is determined from a number of shopping groups that a shopper is a commonly member of with other shoppers.

49. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 44, wherein said leadership index is determined from records of purchaser recommendations of said shopper and a number of times other shoppers in a group of shoppers have followed such a recommendation.

50. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 44, wherein said conformity index is determined from a voting record of said shopper regarding purchase proposals with reference to agreeing with a majority or lead shopper's vote within a group of shoppers.

51. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 44, wherein said assertiveness index is determined from a voting record of said shopper regarding purchase proposal with reference to disagreeing with a majority of lead shopper's vote within a group of shoppers.

52. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 44, wherein said indices are a function of a shopper parameter specified by said merchant.

53. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 43, wherein said targeted information is determined by any of:

a rule specified by said merchant, and

an adaptive algorithmic rule.

54. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 53, wherein said rule specified by said merchant and said adaptive algorithmic rule further determine which are to be said targeted shoppers.

55. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 53, wherein said rule specified by said merchant is based on a particular promotion of goods or services by said merchant.

56. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 53, wherein said adaptive algorithmic rule learns from any of:

a shopper affinity index,

a leadership index,

a conformity index, and

an assertiveness index,

and wherein the indices are determined from said shopper-group interaction measure.

57. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 56, wherein said adaptive algorithmic rule further learns from said shopper-group interaction measure to decide whether to target information to a group or to individual shoppers.

58. (Currently Amended) A method for targeting shoppers participating in online shopping with at least one merchant, said method comprising ~~the steps of~~:

collecting data regarding choices of individual shoppers when shopping individually;

determining an individual shopping behavior measure from the individual shopper data;

collecting group shopping data regarding the choices of individual shoppers when participating in group shopping, said group shopping comprising multiple individuals making at least one group purchase;

determining a group shopping behavior measure from the group shopping data;

determining a shopper-group interaction measure from said individual shopper data and said group shopper data said group shopper data comprising a record of previous interactions between individuals within a shopping group of individuals performing said group shopping,

wherein said previous interactions comprise any of:

a shopper making a proposal to the shopping group;

a shopper voting on a proposal;

a shopper paying for the shopper's individual share of the shopping group's purchase; and

a shopper paying for the shopping group's purchase;

determining targeted information based on said individual shopping behavior measure, said group shopping behavior measure, and said shopper-group interaction measure; and

sending said targeted information to one or more targeted shoppers.

59. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 58, wherein said targeted information is determined by any of:

a rule specified by said merchant, and

an adaptive algorithmic rule.

60. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 59, wherein said rule specified by said merchant and said adaptive algorithmic rule further determine which are to be said targeted shoppers.

61. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 59, wherein said rule specified by said merchant is based on a particular promotion of goods or services by a said merchant.

62. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 59, wherein said adaptive algorithmic rule learns from any of:

a shopper affinity index,

a leadership index,

a conformity index, and

an assertiveness index,

and wherein said indices are determined from said shopper-group interaction measure.

63. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 59, wherein said adaptive algorithmic rule further learns from said shopper-group interaction measure to decide whether to target information to a group or to individual shoppers.

64. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 63, wherein said group shopping measure is determined by any of:

a group compatibility and agreement index,

a maturity index,

a group youthfulness index, and

a group harmony index.

65. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 64, wherein said group compatibility and agreement index is calculated based on a time series of group shopping history and said

individual shopping behavior measure to give an indication of either assimilation leading to targeting information to a group, or lack of assimilation leading to targeting information to individual shoppers.

66. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 65, wherein said individual shopping behavior measure comprises information on demographics, income, purchase history, navigation history, and preferences.

67. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 59, wherein said adaptive algorithmic rule further learns from a shopping context measure derived from the individual shopper data.

68. (Currently Amended) An online shopping system comprising:

a plurality of shopper terminals;

at least one merchant site; and

a shopping server system connected to said shopper terminals and said at least one merchant ~~sites~~ site by a communications link, and wherein said shopping server system includes:

an input/output interface;

a memory ~~unit operable for collecting and storing~~ configured to collect and store data via said input/output interface regarding choices of individual shoppers when shopping individually, and data regarding choices of individual shoppers when participating in group shopping, said group shopping comprising multiple individuals making at least one group purchase;

a processor ~~operable for determining~~ configured to:

determine a shopper-group interaction measure from the individual shopper data and the group shopper data, and

~~determining~~ determine targeting information based on of said shopper group interaction measure, said group shopper data comprising a record of previous interactions between individuals within a shopping group of individuals performing said group shopping,

wherein said previous interactions comprise any of:

a shopper making a proposal to the shopping group;

a shopper voting on a proposal;

a shopper paying for the shopper's individual share of the shopping group's purchase; and

a shopper paying for the shopping group's purchase; and

wherein said input/output interface sends said targeted information to one or more targeted shoppers.

69. (Currently Amende) An online shopping server for interacting with a plurality of shoppers and at least one merchant, comprising:

an input/output interface;

a memory ~~unit operable for collecting and storing~~ configured to collect and store data via said input/output interface regarding choices of individual shoppers when shopping individually, and data regarding the choices of individual shoppers when participating in group shopping, said group shopping comprising multiple individuals making at least one group purchase;

a processor ~~operable for determining~~ configured to:

determine a shopper-group interaction measure from the individual shopper data and the group shopper data, and

~~determining~~ determine targeting information based on of said shopper group interaction measure, said group shopper data comprising a record of previous interactions between individuals within a shopping group of individuals performing said group shopping,

wherein said previous interactions comprise any of:

a shopper making a proposal to the shopping group;

a shopper voting on a proposal;

a shopper paying for the shopper's individual share of the shopping group's purchase; and

a shopper paying for the shopping group's purchase; and

wherein said input/output interface sends said targeted information to one or more targeted shoppers.

70. (Previously Presented) The server of claim 69, wherein said processor is operable for determining said shopper-group interaction measure based on any of:

a shopper affinity index,

a leadership index,

a conformity index, and

an assertiveness index.

71. (Previously Presented) The server of claim 70, wherein said processor is operable for determining affinity index from a number of times a shopper has voted with other members of a group of shoppers.

72. (Previously Presented) The server of claim 70, wherein said processor is operable for determining shopper affinity index from a number of times a shopper's proposal has been voted for by other members of a group of shoppers.

73. (Previously Presented) The server of claim 70, wherein said processor is operable for determining said shopper affinity index from a number of times a shopper has been invited by, or issued an invitation to other members of a group of shoppers.

74. (Previously Presented) The server of claim 70, wherein said processor is operable for determining said shopper affinity index from a number of shopping groups that a shopper is a commonly member of with other shoppers.

75. (Previously Presented) The server of claim 70, wherein said processor is operable for determining said leadership index from records of purchaser recommendations of a shopper and a number of times other shoppers in a group of shoppers have followed such a recommendation.

76. (Previously Presented) The server of claim 70, wherein said processor is operable for determining said conformity index from a voting record of a shopper regarding purchase

proposals with reference to agreeing with a majority or lead shopper's vote within a group of shoppers.

77. (Previously Presented) The server of claim 70, wherein said processor is operable for determining said assertiveness index from a voting record of a shopper regarding purchase proposal with reference to disagreeing with a majority of lead shopper's vote within a group of shoppers.

78. (Previously Presented) The server of claim 70, wherein the indices are determined by said processor as a function of a shopper parameter specified by a merchant input via said input/output interface.

79. (Previously Presented) The server of claim 69, wherein said processor is operable for determining said targeted information based on any of:

a rule specified by a merchant input via said input/output interface, and

an adaptive algorithmic rule stored in said memory unit.

80. (Previously Presented) The server of claim 79, wherein said processor is operable for determining which are to be said targeted shoppers based on a merchant rule and said adaptive algorithmic rule.

81. (Previously Presented) The server of claim 79, wherein said merchant rule is based on a particular promotion of goods or services by said merchant.

82. (Previously Presented) The server of claim 79, wherein said adaptive algorithmic rule learns from any of:

a shopper affinity index,

a leadership index,

a conformity index, and

an assertiveness index,

and wherein the indices are determined by said processor from said shopper-group interaction measure.

83. (Previously Presented) The server of claim 80, wherein said processor applying said adaptive algorithmic rule further learns from the group shopping measure to decide whether to target information to a group or to individual shoppers.

84. (Currently Amended) A program storage device readable by computer, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the computer to perform a method for targeting shoppers participating in online shopping with at least one merchant, said method comprising:

collecting data regarding choices of individual shoppers when shopping individually;

collecting data regarding choices of individual shoppers when participating in group shopping, said group shopping comprising multiple individuals making at least one group purchase;

determining a shopper-group interaction measure from the individual shopper data and said group shopper data, said group shopper data comprising a record of previous interactions between individuals within a shopping group of individuals performing said group shopping,

wherein said previous interactions comprise any of:

a shopper making a proposal to the shopping group;

a shopper voting on a proposal;

a shopper paying for the shopper's individual share of the shopping group's purchase; and

a shopper paying for the shopping group's purchase;

determining targeted information based on said shopper-group interaction measure; and

sending said targeted information to one or more targeted shoppers.